



It is great to be with you all today to welcome Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi to Union Depot.

The overwhelming support of the community - which you can clearly see here today -- is the reason the transformation of Union Depot into Minnesota's 21st Century multimodal transit hub is happening. For the past ten years, business leaders, labor unions, the traveling public and federal state and local units of government from across the region have worked together to drive this effort forward.

I am so pleased that my friend, Jim Oberstar is here today. As Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman and, he has been a key partner working with us. He was instrumental in securing a major down payment through the last transportation reauthorization bill, putting Union Depot back on the map designated as a Project of National and Regional Significance.

In 2008, when our nation was facing the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, the outlook for this project, like so many others, looked uncertain. A decade of hard work, could

have been lost for another decade or two. Then in early 2009, the leadership of Speaker Pelosi, the majority of our Minnesota delegation and our colleagues Congress secured the passage of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* in early 2009, which President Obama signed into law.

The *Recovery Act* has provided the opportunity to leverage the broad local support here to keep this project moving even as our economy recovers. Union Depot was one of more than 1400 projects nationwide competing for a Recovery Act TIGER grant, and in February, it was THE Minnesota project chosen, receiving \$35 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Because of the *Recovery Act*, Union Depot construction will begin this fall. Union Depot is successful, because of strong support -- from the President of the United States to the President of the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce and Minnesota AFL-CIO President Knutson here today. This investment in our community is a model project for the nation - Union Depot is a true showcase of the commitment locally and by the President and Speaker Pelosi and Congress to build a transportation future for America that creates jobs, modernizes our economy, and protects the environment.

Thank you for working with such great presidents. This project will mean thousands of construction jobs right here in St. Paul, building a 21st Century transportation system and boosting our economy. This is a huge milestone and we look forward to continuing our strong partnership to keep Minnesota moving forward on investments in High Speed Rail, Amtrak and key transit corridors like Central, Corridor, Red Rock, I-94 and Riverview Corridors that will connect at Union Depot.

[Introduction of U.S. Speaker Nancy Pelosi]

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1987 from the 8th District of California, she is currently serving her 10th full term. In 2001, she won election as Minority Whip, then in 2002 as Minority Leader. In 2007, she sworn in as the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, making her the highest-ranking woman ever in the United States government, and second in the constitutional line of presidential succession to the president. Her strong and decisive leadership has earned her tremendous respect from both sides of the aisle in Congress. Before she was elected speaker (and had more time), she was my mentor, I'm proud to call her my friend, and she is a powerful force for change, our great Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.